(c) and (d) No, Sir. This facility has been provided to accommodate those passengers who have to travel at short notice. A flat refund of 25% of total fare charged on the ticket, excluding Tatkal charges is granted on cancellation of confirmed Tatkal tickets, which are presented for cancellation upto 24 hours before the schedule departure of the train.

The booking under Tatkal scheme is normally done from originating to terminating point of the train with boarding facility from intermediate station. However, zonal railways have been authorised to earmark Tatkal quota at some intermediate stations also keeping in view the traffic pattern and utilisation of end-to-end Tatkal quota. In such cases, the passengers travelling from originating station to any station short of such intermediate station will pay fare upto that intermediate station and not upto terminating station of the train.

(e) The extent of accommodation to be earmarked under Tatkal scheme in different classes has been specified as mentioned in reply to part (a).

Advance booking period

916. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the advance booking period has been extended to 90 days in the trains;

(b) if so, how much income railways has received during the period till date since its inception;

(c) whether this is exploitation of passengers rather than to help them because the chances for cancellation of tickets is more in this compared to the short booking periods;

(d) whether this act of the Railways is an exploitation of the passengers in two ways holding the money without giving any interest for three months and imposing huge penalty of Rs. 40 and 60 for sleeper and 3 AC coaches respectively per person on cancellation; and

(e) if so, the justification thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Advance Reservation Period (ARP) has been enhanced from 60 to 90 days (excluding the date of journey) w.e.f. 01/02/2008.

(b) During the period from 01-02-2008 till 20-02-2008, earnings from sale of reserved tickets through computerised Passenger Reservation System (PRS) has been approximately Rs. 752.59 crores.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. This is to facilitate passengers to plan their journey well in advance.

Removal of AC coaches from Bareilly-Mughalsarai express

†917. SHRI VEER PAL SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons due to which two AC coaches have been removed from Bareilly-Mughalsarai (4308) express;

(b) whether there is any proposal for making this train an express train between Lucknow-Mughalsarai;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.